

Serial No.: 10/754,153

REMARKS

Claims 1-24, 26 and 27 are now pending in the application. Claims 1, 12 and 13 are amended herein. Claim 25 has been canceled. Entry of the amendments and favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

I. CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the features of dependent claim 25, now canceled. Claims 12 and 13 have been amended to independent form.

Accordingly, the amendments do not raise any new issues of patentability. Entry of the amendments is respectfully requested.

II. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the continued careful examination of the application. Applicant notes with appreciation the allowance of claims 17-24, and the indicated allowability of claims 12-16 and 27 subject to being amended to independent form.

As noted above, claims 12 and 13 are amended herein to independent form. Consequently, claims 12-24 and 27 should now be in condition for allowance.

III. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-11 AND 25-26 UNDER 35 USC §102(e)

Claims 1-11 and 25-26 stand rejected under 35 USC §102(e) based on *Ebert et al.* (US 6,615,116 B2). This rejection is respectfully traversed for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the features of claim 25, now canceled. Specifically, claim 1 is amended to emphasize that the combination of signals which the interface circuit is configured to receive is *not* representative of a standardized smart weapon interface. As applicant previously argued, the umbilical cable of claim 1 is directed to enabling aircraft which are not equipped to handle any type of smart weapon standard to nevertheless be able to utilize smart weapons.

In maintaining the rejection of claim 1 and claim 25, the Examiner argues:

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[A]s far as the receiving smart weapon is concerned, the signals in the Mil-Std-1760 format are not standardized in a way that they can be used by the smart weapon. As such they meet the claim limitation "non-standard ... signals". Only signals in the MK 82 format are usable by the smart weapon and therefore only these signals are considered to be standardized. ... It is further argued that the umbilical cable of claim 1 is equipped to enable an aircraft which are not equipped to handle any type of smart weapon standard to nevertheless be able to utilize smart weapons. In response, this feature is also not claimed. (O.A., p. 3).

In response, claim 1 now recites how the combination of signals which the interface circuit is configured to receive "is not representative of a standardized smart weapon interface". In other words, the combination of signals which the interface circuit is configured to receive is not representative of any standardized smart weapon interface. It is this feature by which the umbilical cable of claim 1 enables aircraft which are not equipped to handle any type of smart weapon standard to nevertheless be able to utilize smart weapons. If the interface of the present invention is designed to received a combination of signals which is not representative of any standardized smart weapon interface as recited in amended claim 1, it is clear that the combination of signals is non-standard with respect to any standardized smart weapon.

The Examiner noted that the Mil-Std-1760 signals as received by an MK 82 smart weapon may be considered as non-standard relative to the MK 82 standard in maintaining the rejection of claim 1. However, the Mil-Std-1760 signals as taught in *Ebert et al.* still represent "a standardized smart weapon interface". The fact that the Mil-Std-1760 standard is different from the MK 82 standard does not overcome the fact that the Mil-Std-1760 standard is still a standardized smart weapon interface. Accordingly, *Ebert et al.* still does not teach or suggest each and every element of amended claim 1.

Furthermore, the distinction is significant. As applicant previously argued, *Ebert et al.* is directed to an aircraft that has the capability of controlling smart weapons of one type according to one format but does not necessarily communicate according to the format of another type of smart weapon. The present invention, on the other hand, is directed to aircraft which have *no standardized smart weapon interface whatsoever*.

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This is significant because aircraft which simply have conventional discrete controls (e.g., nose arm, tail arm, etc.) associated with the use of "dumb" weapons can nevertheless utilize smart weapons by virtue of the invention. This results in tremendous cost savings in not having to perform substantial upgrades and retrofitting of existing aircraft. In *Ebert et al.*, the aircraft are already outfitted to handle smart weapons, and it is a much simpler matter to convert the data from one smart weapon format to another.

Accordingly, applicant respectfully submits that *Ebert et al.* neither teaches nor suggests the features of the present invention as recited in amended claim 1. Withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1 together with the claims dependent therefrom is respectfully requested.

IV. CONCLUSION

Accordingly, all claims 1-24, 26 and 27 are believed to be allowable and the application is believed to be in condition for allowance. A prompt action to such end is earnestly solicited.

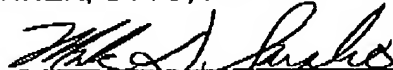
Should the Examiner feel that a telephone interview would be helpful to facilitate favorable prosecution of the above-identified application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number provided below.

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Should a petition for an extension of time be necessary for the timely reply to the outstanding Office Action (or if such a petition has been made and an additional extension is necessary), petition is hereby made and the Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees (including additional claim fees) to Deposit Account No. 18-0988.

Respectfully submitted,

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DATE: March 11, 2005

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